SPRING Events Calendar

**Blaffer Gallery**
Existed: Leonardo Drew  
**May 16–August 1**  
*Opening Reception: May 15*  
*Free Admission*

**Moores School of Music**
20th Anniversary Season  
Immanuel and Helen Olshan Texas Music Festival  
Orchestra Concert Series  
**June 13, 19, 20, 27 and July 3**

Distinguished Artist Series Concerts  
**June 9, 16, 23, 30**

*For more UH events, visit www.uh.edu/calendar.*
Could a UH Researcher Hold the Key to a Cure for Cancer and Diabetes?

Find Out Who He is and What He’s Doing to Change the World
What’s Inside

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www.uh.edu/magazine
The University of Houston of my college years—
the mid-1960s—
was a very different place than it is today.

We had just become a public institution, there were a lot fewer buildings, and our research programs were in their infancy.

Today’s UH is a true metropolitan university—home to students from 137 nations, multimillion-dollar research programs that are finding practical solutions to modern society’s most complex challenges, and an academic infrastructure that offers our students world-class educational opportunities.

The best, however, is yet to come. Today, our alma mater is poised to take the next leap to top-tier national status. A president with a clear vision on how to take us there is at the helm. And the momentum continues to build, with the recent announcement of the hiring of Jan-Åke Gustafsson with his fifteen-member research team and the news that the Carnegie Foundation has awarded UH its prestigious “Community Engagement” classification.

A significant factor in UH becoming the state’s next top-tier university will be the investment our legislators are willing to make.

I invite you to join Board of Regents Chairman Welcome Wilson’s “Chairman’s Brigade” to show your support for UH and the future of Texas. To find out more about this initiative or to join with the hundreds who have signed up already to take our message to Austin, please send your e-mail to welcomewilson@gslwelcome.com.

Jim P. Wise (’66)
Secretary
UH System Board of Regents
message from the president

$7 MILLION DONATION
is a Vote of Confidence for UH

Another step toward Tier One

ANONYMOUS DONOR’S GIFT CREATES A NEW SCHOLARSHIP FUND.

As I’m sure you know, we have been working diligently to elevate the University of Houston to national Tier-One status. You will see in this issue of the magazine many examples of our progress toward that goal, including the recruitment of world-renowned researcher Dr. Jan Åke Gustafsson, our football team’s exciting bowl game win, our designation as a top-tier university for community engagement, and the growing support we have from many of our elected officials in the city, county, state, and nation.

One vital factor for achieving national Tier-One status—along with increased research funding, faculty accomplishments, annual giving, and degrees awarded—is the academic excellence of an institution’s freshman class. I am thrilled to share with you that we have another powerful vote of confidence from an anonymous donor who has given us $7 million to support our student success priorities.

Thanks to this generous gift, we have created a new UH TierOne Scholarship Fund. I also have issued a challenge to spark additional Tier-One scholarship support: Any new scholarship contributions of $25,000 or more will be matched dollar for dollar with funds from this remarkable $7 million gift. This would create a powerful $14 million scholarship endowment that will allow us to offer 200 new merit- and need-based scholarships for outstanding freshmen each year.

Our UH TierOne Scholarship recipients will have the funding support they need to participate directly in research projects with faculty, study abroad and develop a global network of contacts, and make a difference right here in Houston through innovative community service initiatives. I’m sure you will agree that nurturing Tier-One-caliber students at UH will create a brain trust that benefits all of Houston now and in the future. These scholarships will create a legacy of excellence. By helping the brightest minds overcome today’s economic challenges, we will ensure that our students are well-prepared leaders who can help our society overcome even greater challenges in the future.

Renu Khator
Renu Khator
Midway into his first season as head football coach of the University of Houston Cougars, Kevin Sumlin was at a crossroads. His team’s record was a disappointing one win and three losses—several levels short of fulfilling the lofty penthouse aspirations for the program.

The first African American head football coach in the Cougars’ sixty-year history, Sumlin faced what some believed to be a make-or-break situation as his young squad was deemed a double-digit underdog to 23rd-ranked Conference USA power East Carolina in the season’s fifth game.

Doubts were beginning to surface on Internet message boards, sports radio call-in shows, and among some members of the media and fans.

Sumlin, whom Athletics Director Dave Maggard hired away from the Oklahoma Sooners with only three weeks left in the recruiting season, insists he never lost confidence in his team, his staff, or in his ability to lead.

“We went through some really tough times,” including close losses and four consecutive road games because of Hurricane Ike, he says in a firm, but soft-spoken voice. “That we were able to bounce back from a difficult start is a credit to our kids and our staff. They held together and, as it turns out, the three teams we lost to wound up being pretty good. So, I really thought we were on the right track. That became evident as we almost put ourselves in a position to play for a conference championship.”

Houston’s 41–24 upset of East Carolina was the Cougars’ first road win over a ranked opponent in twenty-four years. Coupled with their 70–30 victory over 24th-ranked Tulsa in November, it marked the first time since 1984 that Houston defeated two ranked teams in the same season.

Sumlin became the first UH coach in twenty-eight years to lead his team to a bowl victory, as Houston defeated Air Force 34–28 in the Armed Forces Bowl. With eight victories, Sumlin recorded the most wins by a first-year head coach in UH history.

“We had some good things happen last year,” he says. “But, we had some not-so-good things happen, too. We start every year with a goal to win the West (division in Conference USA). We didn’t accomplish our primary goal,
Cougars Fulfill High Expectations

Football

Fueled by a desire to “be the team that broke that record,” Houston freshman running back Bryce Beall helped the Cougars end a nearly thirty-year postseason winless drought by scampering for 135 yards and a score in UH’s 34–28 victory over Air Force in the Armed Forces Bowl game played in December.

“That wasn’t a streak we were happy with,” says senior linebacker Phillip Hunt, who in his fourth consecutive bowl finally got to celebrate. “It is good to set a winning tradition here. Hopefully our young guys will come along and keep it up.”

Baseball

After winning the Conference USA Tournament Championship in 2008, the University of Houston baseball team returns in 2009 with high expectations. UH put together a thrilling comeback at the Conference Tournament that included playing its way through the losers’ bracket to defeat Marshall 3–2 to take home the title and advance to the 18th NCAA Regional appearance in school history. Joining the Cougars this season are twelve newcomers that will be looked upon to make an immediate impact.

Community Involvement

Off the field, UH’s Robert Ramos, a freshman who has performed more than 200 hours of community service over the past year, received the 2008 National Major League Baseball (MLB) S.T.A.R. Award.

The program recognizes Boys & Girls Clubs of America members, ages 10 to 18, who lead by example and demonstrate the positive behaviors of sportsmanship, team spirit, achievement, and responsibility.

“I believe diversity should be celebrated in my city, and it starts with me,” he says. “Every time I do community service, I know it makes a difference in at least one person’s life. It makes me feel good to help others work toward a brighter future, and this will be a part of my lifelong mission.”
so that gives us an attitude and an edge as we get back to work in preparation for next year.”

Tucked away in his office on the second floor of the Athletics/Alumni Center, the 44-year-old Sumlin laughs easily and often in discussing topics that stretch far beyond the football field.

As he answers one probing question after another, his ability to focus is evident despite a constantly ringing phone and a steady trail of visitors.

“You’ve got a good one in Kevin Sumlin,” says Tom Dienhart of Rivals.com, considered by many to be the nation’s No. 1 authority on college football. “The challenge will be in keeping him at UH. He’s going to succeed, and that will mean a lot of schools will be interested in talking to him.”

Sumlin, a former stellar linebacker at Purdue University, says he doesn’t worry about things beyond his control.

“If five years from now people are saying we’ve graduated players at a high rate, that we’re one of the top programs in our league year in and year out, and that we’ve had a ton of success in recruiting in-state kids—particularly those in the Greater Houston area—then everything else will take care of itself,” he says.

As a national debate continues over the NCAA’s hiring practices—only seven of 120 teams in the Bowl Subdivision have African American head coaches—Sumlin knows the best statement he can make on the topic is to win.

“I try to let my performance address the minority hiring issue,” he says. “Any success that I have can only help the situation and, hopefully, create opportunities for others. The reality is, whether you’re black, white, or whatever, in college football today, either you win games, or you get fired.”

To deal with the pressures, Sumlin turns to his family for support.

“My wife (Charlene) is great,” he says. “That’s the key. We’ve got four kids, and they are involved in a million things. She keeps everything running smoothly.

“I’m well aware of the time I have to put in here, and I love what I do. But, I’m very fortunate in that I’m in a situation where I can start my mornings by getting my kids up each day, having breakfast with them, and taking them to school. I truly enjoy hanging out with my kids.”

Sumlin counts golf and reading biographies among his off-the-field passions.

“I read quite a lot about how people throughout history have dealt with, and overcome, difficult challenges, particularly in times of crisis,” he says.

To share that message with his players, Sumlin keeps a sign in the team’s locker room that says, “No excuses.”

“The reason I coach college football and not professional football is that I really enjoy what happens between 18 and 23. It’s a life-changing time for young men, and we have a direct impact on that. We have a slogan around here: ‘You don’t have to be THE man, you need to be A man.’ That’s all we want. To be a man encompasses a lot.”
UH’s Link to Houston: A Synergistic Relationship

Six years ago, James Carmouche was a construction worker with a unique idea. Today, with help from the University of Houston Small Business Development Center, Carmouche is a business owner—having turned his idea into a marketable product he is now pitching to major corporations in the city.

“They brought me from being a construction worker into the business field,” says Carmouche, owner of Industrial Innovations, LLC, which produces and markets his product, the “Eradicator,” a device that removes wooden forms used to build concrete.

“There is no better program in the world than this one at the University of Houston,” he says.

Carmouche is one of thousands of Houstonians whose lives are improved each year by their association with the University of Houston. Whether helping residents start their own businesses, introducing them to art and music, providing free or reduced-cost vision care, or offering a world-class education, UH is synergistically linked to the Greater Houston community.

That connection and dedication to Houston has been present since the beginning. In 1927, when describing what he saw as the university’s purpose, E.E. Oberholtzer, UH’s first president, said:

“The University of Houston is a service institution for the metropolitan area. [It] desires to grow in service and become the center of culture, as well as the center of practical learning in professional, business, and industrial pursuits. This university will become great if the citizenship of this area desires to make it great.”

Since those early days, when the university held its first classes after hours at San Jacinto High School, to the present, with a nearly 600-acre campus and world-class facilities, UH has worked to live up to that vision.

In December, the university was honored among the top “community-engaged” universities in the nation by the prestigious CARNEGIE FOUNDATION for the Advancement of Teaching.

In earning that designation, UH joins 119 other nationally competitive institutions including Duke, Michigan State, Ohio...
The research, consulting experience, performing arts, outreach programs, and workforce education offered by UH also has touched the lives of nearly every person in the Houston region.

“The University of Houston has more impact than perhaps any other institution of higher learning on the culture and economy of America’s fourth-largest city,” says Houston Mayor Bill White, speaking of the recent Carnegie designation. “It is deserving of this recognition among America’s top-flight colleges and universities. We know it to be deserving of top-tier recognition in so many of its endeavors.”

An example of the university’s broad impact on the Houston region can be found in the Houston Teacher’s Institute—a partnership between UH and the Houston Independent School District. The institute has helped more than 500 teachers strengthen their content knowledge and creativity in a wide variety of subject matters throughout its ten-year history. With the help of UH professors in the arts and sciences, those teachers have created innovative curriculum that has benefitted more than 35,000 local students.

UH also affects countless individuals on a personal level.

Student volunteers with the university’s Metropolitan Volunteer Program provide service for a variety of community initiatives.

The Center for Consumer Law, operated by the UH Law Center, provides educational programs attended by more than 35,000 people, and the Texas Consumer Complaint Center has helped more than 2,000 consumers save more than $1.2 million.

Through the Office of Community Projects in the Graduate College of Social Work, individuals at more than 500 human service agencies interact with UH student workers.

Felina Franklin, a Ph.D. candidate in the college, helps perform program evaluations and community needs assessments for nonprofit organizations such as the United Way. The needs assessments, which involve studying U.S. census data and interviewing everyone from community leaders to potential clients, help the organizations determine which charities to support.
For Franklin, the work is integral to her training and provides skills she will use throughout her career. For the community, her work provides them a voice.

“We can sit in our office, do the census data, and see where there are needs . . . but by going out and talking directly with people in the community, we find out what is really going on,” Franklin says. “I think it is empowering to them—they are being heard.”

The UH College of Optometry helps provide vision care to underserved populations in the Greater Houston area through its Mobile Eye Institute headed by Dr. Gavin Gerondale.

The “medical specialty bus” was driven to dozens of area schools last year and provided glasses to 430 students.

The institute, a partnership between the college and the city of Houston, operates a medical specialty bus that travels throughout the city. It treats patients with limited or no access to traditional healthcare, with language and cultural barriers, and with limited or no financial resources. The patients receive quality vision care for free, while optometry students gain valuable patient-care experience.

Heidi Suprun, executive director of Eye Care for Kids Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides free vision care and glasses for low-income students, says the Mobile Eye Institute fills an important need in the community. By partnering with her organization, the “medical specialty bus” was driven to dozens of area schools last year and provided glasses to 430 students.

The university also serves this community’s cultural needs and interests—providing access to music, opera, dance, theater, and facilities such as Blaffer Gallery, the Art Museum of the University of Houston.

The Houston Shakespeare Festival, produced by the School of Theatre & Dance, has presented outdoor performances in Houston for thirty-one years.

“I think we are filling a huge hunger for something other than the frivolous,” says Sidney Berger, professor of theatre and founder/director of the festival. “People look to those plays for the consideration of the important questions in life.”

Crowds as large as 15,000 gather for the plays, performed each summer at Miller Outdoor Theater in Hermann Park. Each time, Berger says he meets people who were touched by Shakespeare for the first time, such as one woman who said she finally understood Shakespeare after a production of The Merchant of Venice.

“She said, ‘Thank you for updating the language. I understood every word,’” Berger says. “Of course, I hadn’t changed a word.”

The business community also benefits from the University of Houston. In addition to providing local companies with a skilled workforce, UH, through programs like the Small Business Development Center, helps promote the creation of new businesses. In 2008, the center provided nearly 34,000 hours of free management consulting and 33,000 hours of training seminars and workshops to 13,000 owners of small- and medium-sized businesses.

For people like James Carmouche, that is a path to a better future. Through collaboration with the center, Carmouche was put in touch with a patent attorney. He learned how to create a business plan, raise capital, contact potential customers, and market his product.

“This program has brought me a long way,” he says.

Stories like Carmouche’s are echoed throughout Greater Houston because of UH’s devotion to community engagement, says Susan Rogers, a UH architecture professor and director of the Community Design Resource Center, who authored the university’s application for the Carnegie Foundation.

“Our original mission was to be the university for the working man and woman in Houston, and I think that kind of grounding in our community that began early on has maintained itself,” Rogers says. “Amazing things are happening at UH.”
“We need the city and the community to support us,” says Antel. “The community needs us to attract a twenty-first-century workforce and build the cultural capital in the community to attract the best and the brightest. We are partners, and our success is inextricably linked.”

Antel, who had been dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences since July 2002, assumed his new role as provost and senior vice president/chancellor on February 1.

Antel joined UH as an assistant professor of economics in 1981. He was named an associate professor in 1988 and became a full professor in 1995. Among his numerous leadership roles, he chaired the Department of Economics from 1997 to 2002, and since 2004, has chaired the Undergraduate Enrollment Management Taskforce.

He holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of California at Los Angeles and a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of California at Berkeley. Antel was selected as provost following a national search.

“I am delighted to have Dr. Antel as a key member of my leadership team as we continue to build momentum toward becoming a top-tier research university,” says President Renu Khator.

“One key to student success is the hands-on experience gained through work in the community. For example, Antel says, UH’s Center for Public History is working on a project about the history of the Third Ward.

“This honors the contributions of this important community and local school history programs, and it helps us do research and train graduate students,” he says.

While there are several great ongoing programs in the community, Antel says he would like to see many programs expanded, with more student workers and graduate student trainees doing community-based research and clinical training in a variety of areas.

“One thing is not have significant financial resources to support all community programs, we do have a lot of human capital,” he says. “We plan to use our expertise in various areas to reach out and serve this community.”

“Dr. Antel is highly respected in the academic world as a researcher and as an administrator, and he has a proven track record of promoting academic excellence and student success.”
Claudia Schmuckli has been named director of Blaffer Gallery, the Art Museum of the University of Houston. Previously, she served as the museum’s acting chief curator. Schmuckli joined Blaffer in 2004 as director of public relations and membership. In 2006, she was appointed curator. She also has served as assistant curator at New York’s Museum of Modern Art and as curatorial assistant at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

UH has received a five-year, $450,000 grant from Houston Endowment Inc. for the Achieving the Dream program—a national, multiyear effort to improve academic success rates for historically underrepresented and low-income students. The university’s plan includes three initiatives: a transfer student orientation, advisors embedded on community college campuses, and software development to help students determine how their community college hours will transfer to UH.

The UH extension program at the University of Cape Town (UCT) has yielded more than a dozen homegrown petroleum geophysicists eager to enter the oil industry in South Africa. The thirteen-course extension program offers a Master of science in petroleum geophysics. UH’s applied geophysics and geology faculty were able to complement the UCT faculty with their real-world petroleum experience with Houston exploration and production companies.

The UH Law Center is a leader in public interest law—the only Texas law school cited by the National Jurist magazine. The Law Center’s externship program places students with nonprofit and government agencies and has provided more than $700,000 for summer Public Interest Fellowships since 2000. Other public interest efforts by law students and alumni range from pro bono hurricane relief assistance and community legal aid to consumer advocacy.

The student-led plan to enhance and update the University Center (UC) leaped its first major hurdle as students approved a $100 million renovation plan. Upgrades will include enhanced dining options; updated technology; and expanded meeting, study, and lounge areas. Students approved a self-imposed fee increase to pay for the renovations as a way to breathe new life into the forty-two-year-old facility. The plan must now be approved by the UH System Board of Regents, the state Legislature, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

KHATOR: Global Leader in Higher Education

Appointment to India’s Global Advisory Council Recognizes Significance of UH President’s Initiatives

The government of India has named President Renu Khator to the Prime Minister’s Global Advisory Council of Overseas Indians to facilitate a dynamic two-way engagement between stakeholders in India and the overseas Indian community.

Khator, who was born in Uttar Pradesh and earned a bachelor’s degree at Kanpur University, is among eminent people of Indian origin in diverse fields around the world who will serve on the twenty-five-member council.

“I am deeply honored to join such a prestigious group of world leaders,” Khator says. “This represents yet another opportunity to position the University of Houston as a global resource for expertise and to increase the university’s visibility on an international scale.”

The council specifically will focus on the promotion of business-to-business partnerships—leveraging knowledge, skills, and expertise possessed by the overseas community for socio-economic development in the country. Khator is the sole representative from higher education and serves with global leaders including Indra Nooyi, CEO of Pepsi; Nobel laureate Amartya Sen; economist Jagdish Bhagwati; Swadesh Chatterjee, West Bengal’s prominent Indian American activist; and the steel mogul L.N. Mittal, among others.

In addition to being chaired by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the council also includes India’s External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee, Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs Vyalar Ravi, and other senior government officials.

The India Telegraph, based in Calcutta, India, lauded Khator, saying the appointment was in recognition of the “significance of Renu Khator’s initiatives.”

Khator, who began her tenure at UH in January 2008, has a long history of community engagement, serving on numerous boards and advisory councils. A noted scholar in global environmental policy, Khator and her husband, Suresh Khator, in January 2007, were awarded the prestigious Hind Rattan (Jewel of India), given to nonresident Indians for making outstanding contributions in their field. The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services included her among its 2006 Outstanding Americans by Choice awardees. The award recognizes achievements of naturalized citizens.

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making an impact

COUNT on UH Mathematicians for Improved HEART HEALTH

Suncica Canic is not a medical doctor, but her research could save the lives of heart patients.

Canic, Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Distinguished Professor in Mathematics, and her colleagues are at the forefront of an emerging field that combines math and bioscience to yield new medical breakthroughs.

With fourteen bioscience mathematicians on its faculty, the Department of Mathematics has become a leader in math bioscience. The high-level mathematics they use in medical research cannot be done by biomedical engineers alone.

In 2008, researchers from the University of Houston, Rice University, and the Texas Medical Center formed the Center for Mathematical Biosciences, which is poised to become the world’s leading center for integrating advanced mathematics with medical research.

The center builds on collaborative research that already is producing results. Canic and a cardiologist at the Texas Heart Institute published a study on using mathematical modeling that improves artery stents.

By developing complex mathematical models that evaluate how blood flows in pulsating arteries and how artery stents behave when inserted into the human body, Canic is working to create more biocompatible devices that can keep arteries open.

The center’s researchers also are studying nano-particles as a means to improve cancer-drug delivery. Advanced mathematical simulations are helping scientists design microscopic containers loaded with cancer drugs that will deliver the medicine directly to cancer cells.

Other ongoing research at the center includes medical image analysis and the study of neuronal networks. No other institution combines both the concentration of bioscience mathematicians with the largest medical center in North America.

UH MOMENT

Melodies of the SOUL

Composer Franz Schubert once exclaimed: “the moment is supreme!”

As Jessica Zhou’s nimble fingers glide across the piano keys, peacefully and effortlessly giving melody to sheets of notes, it is obvious that her “supreme moment” comes from her love of music and that her life’s work has begun at the University of Houston.

Zhou, a piano performance major, received the prestigious Marshal Scholarship, an honor given to only forty U.S. students each year.

“For me, it’s something that feeds my soul, and it feeds everything. It’s the architecture of who I am,” Zhou says.

The Moores School of Music student credits her academic experiences and faculty mentors, such as Professor of Piano Nancy Weems, with her current success.

Zhou aims to follow the melody of her soul to pursue performing, teaching, or public service so she can make a difference in her community.

“It’s a blessing. It’s a gift. And it’s my responsibility to develop it the best that I can,” she says.

Already an accomplished musician, Zhou will continue her graduate studies in the UK.

“I see everything that I do, whether it is teaching or performing, as an ability to have an impact on those around me. Getting this scholarship is what’s going to allow me to make that difference to other people,” she adds.

TO LISTEN TO THE INTERVIEW AND TO LEARN MORE ABOUT UH MOMENT, VISIT www.uh.edu/uhmoment.
Changes Reflect UH’s MISSION

Student success, quality academic programs, and expanded opportunities go hand in hand.

Starting next fall, the Cullen College of Engineering will offer a bachelor’s degree in petroleum engineering to help replenish the industry’s aging workforce.

“Launching a new undergraduate program in petroleum engineering is a significant step toward meeting the workforce needs of the energy industry,” says Joseph W. Tedesco, Elizabeth D. Rockwell Dean’s Chair and college dean. “The demand for petroleum engineers has never been greater, and we are now situated to better serve our energy-centered region as well as our nation.”

Approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the program will combine the fundamentals of petroleum engineering and geosciences with economics, energy law, and business. The program, along with a pre-existing master’s degree option, will fill gaps in the workforce and arm graduates with the skills needed to respond to the evolving industry.

The college also will add a biomedical engineering department to develop that highly skilled workforce and drive discovery. The department is an outgrowth of the college’s long-standing biomedical engineering program, which has been housed for more than three decades in the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

The College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics also is expanding its offerings through new research and degree plans that study air pollution and climate change. To reflect this broader mission, the geosciences department has changed its name to the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences.
Faculty Honors

Raymond Applegate, Irvin M. Borish Chair in Optometry and professor, has received the Garland W. Clay Award from the American Academy of Optometry.

Edward Blair, Michael J. Cemo College Professor in Marketing of the Department of Marketing & Entrepreneurship in the C.T. Bauer College of Business, was named the 2009 chair of the American Statistical Association Committee, which advises the U.S. Department of Energy’s Energy Information Administration.

Carl A. Boger Jr., associate dean of the Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management, is the first recipient of the Clinton L. Rappole Distinguished Chair, the fourth endowed chair at the college. Professor Emeritus Rappole was the college’s first Eric Hilton Distinguished Chair. Boger has devoted more than three decades to teaching and mentoring students.

Dorothy Nicholson ’77 led the campaign to raise $1.2 million for the chair.

Hayan Charara, adjunct professor in the Honors College, was awarded the National Endowment for the Arts Literature fellowship in Poetry. The $25,000 fellowship encourages the production of new works and allows writers the time and means to write.

Hua Chen, assistant professor of pharmacy administration, and Lavanya Sudharshan (M.S. ’08), pharmacy administration alumna, have received the International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research’s Best Contributed Podium Presentation Award in the New Investigator category for “The Disorder (ADHD) from Childhood to Adulthood: A Medicaid Study.”

C.W. “Paul” Chu, T.L.L. Temple Foundation Endowed Chair in Science and professor of physics, was honored at a Vatican ceremony as a recipient of the Ettore Majorana-Erice-Science for Peace Prize. The annual award includes a cash prize to assist recipients, who are elected by the World Federation of Scientists, in their efforts to promote science and peace throughout the world. Chu and fellow physicist Maw-Kuen Wu (Ph.D. ’81) were awarded the prize for their discovery of a high-temperature superconducting system.

Kevin Gee (O.D. ’02), clinical assistant professor and director of UH’s Sport Vision Performance Center, was named Young Optometrist of the Year by the Texas Optometric Association.

Marcus Gonzalez (O.D. ’06), clinical assistant professor, was named the state’s best educator by the Texas Optometric Association.

Martha Haun, associate professor of communication, was honored at a reception at the Texas Speech Communication Association (TCSA) state convention. Haun represented TCSA Region IV as their sole nominee for the 2008 University Educator of the Year.

Fazle Hussain, Hugh Roy and Lillie Cran Cullen Distinguished Professor in Mechanical Engineering, was elected to the Academy of Medicine, Engineering and Science of Texas (TAMEST) board of directors. TAMEST provides recognition to the state’s top achievers in science, engineering, and medicine.

Sebnem Kalemlı-Ozcan, associate professor of economics, has received two awards: the European Central Bank’s 2008 Wim Duisenberg Research Fellow for economists...
in academia, central banks, and top research institutions who are recognized international experts in their field; and the European Commission's Marie Curie Reintegration Award for top researchers who undertake research in Europe.

Ramanan Krishnamoorti, M.D. Anderson Professor of Chemical Engineering, was appointed chair of the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering in the Cullen College of Engineering. He was named a fellow of the American Physical Society for his outstanding research contributions to polymer thermodynamics and structure and properties of polymer nanocomposites.

Carlos Ordóñez, associate professor of physics, has earned the American Physical Society’s 2009 John Wheatley Award, which recognizes physicists who have contributed to the development of science in Third World countries. A native of Panama, Ordóñez credits his opportunity to study with world-class researchers in the United States with helping to launch his career as a theoretical physicist. He is working to extend those same opportunities to promising young scientists from Latin America.

Monica Perales, assistant professor of history, was awarded the 2008 Oral History Association Article Prize for “Fighting to Stay in Smeltertown: Lead Contamination and Environmental Justice in a Mexican American Community.” The article examines the 1970s lead contamination case that brought about the demise of a Mexican working-class barrio in El Paso, Texas, called Smeltertown.

B. Montgomery “Monte” Pettit (’75, ’75, Ph.D. ’80), Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Professor in Chemistry and professor of computer science, physics, biology, and biochemistry, is one of only three researchers in UH history to be awarded the distinction of Fellow from the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Of 486 Fellows, Pettit was one of only sixteen honorees in Texas in 2008.

Jerry Rogers, associate professor of civil and environmental engineering, was inducted as a Distinguished Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and received a Lifetime Service Award for his leadership and service.

Earl Smith III (’72, O.D. ’72, M.S. ’75, Ph.D. ’78), dean of the College of Optometry, was named Optometrist of the Year by the Texas Optometric Association for his contributions to the profession.

Karen Stokes, director of the Center for Choreography and associate professor of dance, has received the Big Range Dance Festival 2008 Buffy Awards’ Best Choreographer in the Even-length Concert category for her piece, Hometown. Also, Jhon Stronks, adjunct instructor of dance and director of the Houston Metropolitan Dance Center’s Pre-Professional Dance Company, The Houston Met Too, received Best Choreographer in the 15-40 minute category for Ok, I’m Here … Now What? and Best Choreographer in the Under 15-minute category for A View From the Edge.

Ronald Turner, Alumnae College Professor in Law, was elected to membership in the American Law Institute. He is a newly elected member of Advocacy Incorporated’s Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Advisory Council.

Amanda Baunle, assistant professor of sociology, authored Same-Sex Partners: The Demography of Sexual Orientation.

David A. Brenner, visiting assistant professor of German in The Honors College, authored German-Jewish Popular Culture before the Holocaust: Kafka’s Kitsch.

Chitra Divakaruni, Betty and Gene McDavid College Professor in Creative Writing, authored Shadowland. Also, The Palace of Illusions, was published as paperback.

Bob Heath, emeritus professor of communication, authored “Terrorism: From the Eyes of the Beholder” and co-authored “The Communication and Rhetoric of Terrorism” and “Shifting Paradigms and New Directions for Managing Terrorism” in Terrorism: Communication and Rhetorical Perspectives. He also is an area editor for advertising, public relations, and strategic communication for the International Encyclopedia of Communication.


Peter Norton, director of UH’s Anxiety Disorders Clinic, co-authored The Anti-Anxiety Workbook.


Mike Ryan, professor of communication, authored Mirror on a War Agenda: Conservative Christian Activists and Media Coverage of the Iraq Invasion,” in Terrorism: Communication and Rhetorical Perspectives.

Kondurur Sivaramakrishnan, C.T. Bauer Chair in Accounting, co-authored Managerial Accounting.

Xiaohong Sharon Wen, associate professor of Chinese and director of Chinese and Japanese programs, authored: Studies of Chinese Language Acquisition by English Speakers: from Theories to Practice.
From L-R: Drs. Michael Lieberman, director of The Methodist Hospital Research Institute (TMHRI); Jan-Åke Gustafsson; and John D. Baxter, co-director of TMHRI’s Center for Diabetes Research.
When Gov. Rick Perry announced at a recent news conference on campus that the state would give the University of Houston a multimillion-dollar grant—its first through the Texas Emerging Technology Fund (ETF)—some members of the audience swelled with pride, others exhaled after months of hard work to make it happen, and all of them watched one man accept the school’s colors and the planet of responsibility that comes with them.

Jan-Åke Gustafsson, an internationally renowned hormones expert, already had accepted an appointment over the summer to expand his revolutionary research efforts at UH. But, the $5.5 million grant from the state sealed the deal and will enable his team to create next-generation pharmaceuticals and medical technologies at a world-class center to be established by UH and The Methodist Hospital Research Institute (TMHRI).

The recruitment of Gustafsson, Foreign Honorary Member of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and member of the Nobel Assembly, represents a significant milestone in fulfilling President Renu Khator’s vision for the university, which includes a UH Health Initiative that will expand UH’s presence and partnerships in the Texas Medical Center.

“We are delighted to have Dr. Gustafsson join our faculty as a key leader in our biomedical initiative,” says Khator. “He was courted by Ivy League institutions and determined the University of Houston offered the best opportunity to advance his research. He will play an important role in our quest for top-tier national recognition.”

The governor calls reaching top-tier status “a journey,” adding that “the University of Houston has taken a large step in that direction today to be a Tier-One institution.”

“This journey has taken the University of Houston to heights that maybe, some years ago, people might not have thought were in reach,” says Perry. “But, as every day goes by, it becomes more and more apparent to folks that this institution is headed to the forefront of not only higher education in the state of Texas, but, particularly, on the forefront of the commercialization of technology. And, the horizon is limitless.”

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His World-Leading Research Targets Deadly Cancers
Strategic Hire

Gustafsson, who holds a Ph.D. and M.D., will head the Center for Nuclear Receptors and Cell Signaling. He will teach at the Department of Biology and Biochemistry and the Department of Chemistry in the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. He also will be a member of TMHRI.

His appointment is the first strategic hire for the UH Health Initiative and follows strategic hires for other UH “research clusters” since Khator arrived last year. His appointment includes a fifteen-member research team, which helps to “fast track” progress and innovation coming out of the new center.

“Often, new ideas and breakthroughs occur at the borders of scientific disciplines,” Gustafsson says. “It’s when they come together in the border zone that you can have new breakthroughs, new ideas—you can advance the field.”

Gustafsson says he looks forward to building a state-of-the-art research center, which will focus on a “medically very important field.”

“The concentration of outstanding scientists at UH, TMHRI, and in the Houston area in general, including the Texas Medical Center, provides unique possibilities for cutting-edge translational research with great clinical and commercial potential,” he adds.

The Workings of Nuclear Receptors

Gustafsson is revered worldwide for his translational research on nuclear receptors, a class of proteins found in cell nuclei that capture hormone molecules and interact with and control the expression of genes. Research in the field is vital in developing treatments for such diseases as cancer and diabetes.

Here’s how nuclear receptors work: Each receptor in the cell’s nucleus has a cavity shaped just so that a hormone molecule can fit inside. Once wedded to the hormone, the nuclear receptor’s outer surface changes, depending upon the type of hormone housed within. Then, other proteins recognize the receptor’s surface structure and join in a chain reaction. This hormone-controlled process influences expression of genetic information and the development and metabolism of an organism.

“Nuclear receptors provide the lock that the key of your hormones fits in. They allow your DNA to be read and expressed,” explains B. Montgomery “Monte” Pettitt (’75, ’75, Ph.D. ’80), Hugh Roy and Lillie Cranz Cullen Professor in Chemistry and professor of computer science, physics, biology, and biochemistry. “Gustafsson discovered a major estrogen receptor protein and has worked in a variety of application areas, including cancer. We are very fortunate to have him and his team relocating to UH.”

Gustafsson’s research group at the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden, in the mid-1990s discovered the existence of a previously unknown estrogen receptor that plays a pivotal role in the function of the brain, lungs, and immune system.

Today, drugs are being developed to stimulate that receptor, named ER-beta, to battle a number of diseases, including breast, prostate, and lung cancers. In some instances, the abnormal cell division that creates cancerous tumors can be slowed down or stopped by stimulating the receptor.

Emerging Technology Fund Grant

The ETF’s Research Superiority Acquisition grants are intended to bring the best and brightest researchers in the world to Texas.

Over the summer, UH and TMHRI applied for a superiority grant to attract Gustafsson and establish the center, a research enterprise aimed at better understanding the relationship between nuclear receptors and disease detection, management, and treatment.
Don Birx, UH vice president for research, says Gustafsson’s team will provide leadership aligned with UH’s mission “to engage the major issues of our time in ways that significantly impact the lives of those around the world.”

Don Birx, UH vice president for research, says he envisions Gustafsson’s research program to span the region, by partnering with medical institutions, and to rapidly establish international prominence.

Over the decades, Gustafsson has developed many fruitful relationships with other prominent Houston researchers. Among them is Bert o’Malley, professor of molecular and cellular biology at Baylor College of Medicine and recent recipient of the National Medal of Science.

“the recruitment of an outstanding scientist such as Dr. Gustafsson to the University of Houston represents a landmark achievement in biologic development at UH. He will bring an internationally recognized team to study estrogen action in normal and diseased tissues that will have a wide impact across other university departments,” says o’Malley.

The potential for commercialization was pivotal to UH’s ETF grant application, Birx explains.

“The approach we take with the ETF is different than you might expect from government. It’s not about a giveaway. It uses incentives, investments that lead to innovation here in Texas,” Perry says. “We’re about finding marketable technologies, fueling those innovations . . . starting ventures that turn a profit. You might say that the old academic motto of ‘publish or perish’ is being replaced by ‘patent or perish.’”

Perry says the UH grant is “the latest example of our efforts to find great ideas born in university laboratories, invest in them to generate the products that can ultimately create jobs, turn a profit—keep our state’s economy going.”

Research Commercialization

Gustafsson has a solid commercialization track record, and he is co-founder of KaroBio AB, a biotechnology company on the Karolinska campus, along with Dr. John D. Baxter, who joined TMHRI last year.

“Of today’s existing drugs, 20 percent are actually drugs that affect, as keys, these nuclear receptors,” Gustafsson explains. “It’s a vast area for further development.”

Dr. Michael Lieberman, director of TMHRI, says the center represents a substantial collaboration between UH and Methodist.

Birx says Gustafsson’s team will provide leadership aligned with UH’s mission “to engage the major issues of our time in ways that significantly impact the lives of those around the world.”

“His scientific and commercialization expertise will capitalize on and serve Texas’ desire to lead in medical discovery—particularly in cancer diagnostics and therapy,” Birx says.

Gustafsson says nuclear receptors are a natural avenue for commercialization, because “if you are skillful and use opportunities, you can use chemicals” to affect the activity of genes.

His work on other nuclear hormone receptors lends itself to new treatments for metabolic syndrome, including atherosclerosis, type 2 diabetes, and nonalcoholic hepatic steatosis, also known as fatty liver. He also has found evidence that the roles played by estrogen receptors and nuclear hormone receptors in the brain may be manipulated to treat neurodegeneration, Parkinson’s disease, Lou Gehrig’s disease, depression, and other mood disorders.

The Team

Researcher Margaret Warner, who has worked with Gustafsson for more than twenty years, and up to fifteen others on his Karolinska team are to join him at UH. Warner will be a faculty member in UH’s Department of Biology and Biochemistry. Gustafsson says he’ll vigorously recruit others in the months to come. “My goal, or our goal, is to have a sizeable center in place in one to two years, and I think that can be done,” he says.

Gustafsson’s Selected Honors

- Member of the Swedish Academy of Sciences
- Winner of the Svedberg Prize in Chemistry, the Anders John Prize of Oslo, and the Soderberg Prize in Medicine
- Director of the Center for Biotechnology at Huddinge University Hospital at Karolinska
- Adjunct full professor at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston since 1987
- Winner of the 2004 Bristol-Meyers Squibb Award in nutrition research
- Author of more than 1,300 peer-reviewed publications
- Cited approximately 60,000 times
exceptional cougars

UH Freshman Barrels Toward GREATNESS

You wouldn’t know it by looking at her, but Chelsea Stanley is a fighter. At first glance, the University of Houston freshman comes across as petite—tiny, even—and unintimidating. But those who know and love her can attest she’s an unstoppable force.

by Angela Hopp ('00)

At 19, she already has done a lot of living and has had more than her share of tragedy. Four years ago, her father, a Houston firefighter, died in a car crash just around the bend from their Waller home.

“There’s a twenty-acre field, and there’s nothing but fences—and one light pole. And he hits the one light pole,” she says, shaking her head in dismay.

Stanley has learned how to roll with the punches.

The death of her father left her orphaned, she says, because she never really had a relationship with her biological mother. Stanley and her stepmother were estranged, so she was made a ward of the state and eventually went to live with her aunt and uncle, who were virtual strangers at the time.

Stanley, however, made a conscious decision to move forward with her life and make her father and new family proud. She set out to be the first woman in her family to earn a college degree.

“Having my dad pass away taught me that whatever you want, you have to go get it,” she says. “When you get it, you have to get it to your fullest ability—no matter if you’re good at it or bad at it. I don’t take life for granted like I think a lot of kids my age do. I take every day as if it could be my last day.”

In high school, Stanley threw herself into academics and extracurricular activities. She performed in plays, became the school mascot, and championed literacy in her community. She even won a state championship in wrestling—despite her 103-pound frame.
“I wrote this play called Memories of a Man, which is actually about my father. A lot of things I did in high school were for my dad—things he would be proud of,” she says.

One of those activities was the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo’s (HLS&R) calf scramble, she says, because her father had been interested in athletics and agriculture. He also was a longtime member of a rodeo cook-off team.

At a recent gathering of rodeo volunteers, she recalled the night she caught her calf: “I will forever have a small scar under my chin from the night I got trampled and kicked. I became a very happy girl after I got across a little white line with my calf.”

But what made that night so memorable was that she knew in her gut that she had made her dad really proud.

Stanley credits Alice Stewart, who advises students at Waller High School, for helping her fund her college education. Stewart calls Stanley “a little dynamite.”

“You could talk to anyone at this campus, and you’d get the same answer. She’s enlightening,” Stewart says. “Anything she touches, she does her best at it.”

In HLS&R, Stanley found a family that provided a $15,000 academic scholarship to support her college education. “I am so grateful that I received a Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Scholarship. Thank you for my education, thank you for all the support through hard times,” she says.

Her experience has inspired her to help other disadvantaged students find money for school.

“One of the biggest things that I want to do is work with kids who’ve had problems like me. I want to talk to them about scholarships,” she says.

Before her father’s death, Stanley spent a lot of time at the restaurant he co-owned, often working into the wee hours and then waking up bright and early for school, all the while garnering impressive grades.

“I’ve always been good at balancing my time, which has helped me in college,” she explains.

Stanley, who entered UH last fall with 18 dual-credit hours, maintains that strict work ethic. She carries a full course load and works part time at UH’s School of Theatre & Dance. She had a 3.5 GPA last fall.

“Chelsea has a good head on her shoulders. It’s rare to come across someone who is so driven and who comes with such energy and eagerness to learn,” says Stanley’s supervisor, Brandy Robichau, School of Theatre & Dance associate director for community relations. “She is the lady of a million questions. She knows what it takes to succeed and is willing to work hard to reach her goals. I respect her passion and enjoy her company.”

Stanley, a theater major, says writing and acting have been both creative and cathartic outlets, and her experience at her father’s eatery makes her believe a minor in hotel and restaurant management would be a good fit.

“I’d like to find a job at a regional theater. If not, there’s always the chance of working for Cirque du Soleil,” she says. “Eventually—and this is a big goal, a big dream, because I think you have to have big dreams—I’d like to open a dinner theater in Houston. Houston is the perfect market for it.”

In the meantime, Stanley intends to continue working hard at school and work.

Her aunt and uncle, Kim and Chris Grimes, insist that people are drawn to Stanley’s personality.

“Everyone she meets immediately just loves her. She’s very kind,” Kim Grimes says. “She’s wise beyond her years and empathetic. We are so proud of her.”

John Alstrin, UH’s assistant band director, who is overseeing Stanley as a mascot in training, agrees Stanley is “a sweetheart.”

“She’s very, very responsible. She’s really into what she’s doing. She sent us a DVD of her as the Waller bulldog. At first, we didn’t return her calls right away, but she was persistent. That was what sold us on her. She’s just really into it.”

Stanley says she loves to entertain and have fun.

“Little kids are what really do it for me,” she says. “The way they laugh and giggle and think I am real. They make all the sweating worth it.”
TOP TIER: What it Means to Our City & State

President Renu Khator and the UH System Board of Regents have been very vocal making the case for the University of Houston to become the state’s next top-tier public research institution. But they aren’t the only ones.

As flattering as a top-tier designation would be for this university’s reputation, that’s not the impetus for pursuing this goal. Top-tier status will be a tremendous benefit to UH and to the overall economic and intellectual climate of the city, Gulf Coast region, and state. This is a compilation of recent comments from prominent leaders concerning UH’s efforts to make top-tier status a reality.

DAVID DEWHURST
Lieutenant Governor of Texas

In the last three years, I have stood in front of the Legislature each year and said, “Look, I’m going to champion higher education.” In 2005–2007, we put $4.6 billion into higher education. And this next session in 2009, we’re going to do more. . . . As our population doubles in the next twenty-five years, in the next ten years as we add 8 million to 9 million more people here in Texas, we’re going to need a third more public schools, a third more public school teachers, more university facilities, more faculty, and yes, a third and fourth Tier-One university. As a Houstonian, I think the University of Houston is a great selection for a Tier-One university.

LARRY FAULKNER
President, Houston Endowment Inc.

Former President, The University of Texas at Austin

What we mean (with terms like “flagship” or “top-tier” or “Tier One”) is a university that is seriously competitive at the national level—competitive for faculty, competitive for students, competitive for national funding, competitive for ideas. Both Dallas-Fort Worth and Greater Houston have more than 5 million residents and huge economies. But neither has a nationally competitive public university. Neither has access to the manifold benefits that such institutions could bring to their future development. The most important targets for development of new institutions ought to be Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth. A state or community cannot make one by enacting a law, or passing a resolution, or printing new banners, or winning a sports championship, or pouring a lot of money into a place. The job is done by having leadership with an eye for talent, patient investment, and a strong habit of continuous improvement.

RICK PERRY
Governor of Texas

There’s a lot of talk about Tier-One institutions and how you get to be one. Higher education is essential to the continued growth of our state, to the reputation of our state, to the success of our state, and I would say, to the success of our citizens. Those conversations on how we attain the Tier-One institutions that we need and deserve in this state include approaches like the one we’re discussing today (the University of Houston’s enhanced presence as a biomedical research institution). This journey has taken the University of Houston to heights that maybe, some years ago, people might not have thought were in reach. But, as every day goes by, it becomes more and more apparent to folks that this institution is headed to the forefront not only higher education in the state of Texas, but, particularly, the forefront of the commercialization of technology. And, the horizon is limitless.
Anyone who is in any policy position representing Harris County, this region, or the state of Texas who doesn’t think the University of Houston should be Tier One is just not thinking about the future of the state. What is started today, we won’t really see the results of necessarily in our lifetime. We’ll see the beginnings, but the results will be seen through the eyes of children not yet born. Whether it’s a child born just a few blocks from UH or in a hut with no electricity, with no running water, he or she is going to someday look up and find himself or herself coming to the city of Houston to the premier institution known as the University of Houston.

The University of Houston is a major link between Texas communities and Houston-area industries. As a TOP-TIER UNIVERSITY, UH will be better equipped to open doors and build successful futures for Texans everywhere.
Paying tribute to a life well-lived
Wilhelmina Daisy Cullen Robertson Smith 1922–2009

by Kelli Ferrell

University of Houston alumna Wilhelmina Daisy Cullen Robertson Smith (‘44, HON ’88) was exposed to philanthropy at a young age by observing her father, Hugh Roy Cullen.

And until her death on January 26, 2009, at age 86, she continued her family’s legacy of supporting the university. She was the last surviving child of Cullen and Lillie Cranz Cullen, UH’s founding family and first major benefactors.

In 1947, the Cullens donated a substantial part of their wealth to create The Cullen Foundation. The foundation was, at the time, one of the largest private foundations in the United States.

Since that time, the Cullen family and associated entities have contributed nearly $70 million to UH and the UH System.

Smith served as the first trustee of agriculture for The Cullen Foundation—alongside her older sisters Agnes and Margaret—at its inception.

“She taught us what her parents had taught her—to always give to others.”

Wilhelmina E. “Beth” Robertson

She also was a life member of the University of Houston Alumni Association, which presented her with a Distinguished Alumni Award in 1989. Her first husband, Corbin J. Robertson Sr., who died in 1991, was a strong advocate of early Cougar athletics programs. His name graces the university’s sports stadium.

In 2008, the UH System Board of Regents paid tribute to her, approving the construction of the Wilhelmina Robertson Smith Stadium Complex—a $38.7 million sports complex to be built on the north end of Robertson Stadium.

In her honor, the board also issued a remembrance and appreciation proclamation, which states: “Wilhelmina Cullen Robertson Smith generously supported and actively participated in innumerable University of Houston events during her lifetime, holding a very special place in her heart for Cougar athletics, as well as supporting programs and activities at UH-Downtown, including student support.”

Smith’s and Robertson’s children are Beth Robertson, former chair of the UH System Board of Regents; Lillie T. Robertson, friend and supporter of UH arts programs; Corbin J. Robertson Jr., advocate for the Texas Center for Superconductivity at the University of Houston; Carroll Robertson Ray, current member of the UH System Board of Regents; and Alison S. Robertson Baumann.

Besides her children, Smith leaves behind her husband, Edgar A. Smith Jr., many relatives, and a university that is ever grateful for a life well-lived.
Joe Pratt, NEH Cullen Chair in Business and History and interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, began researching the lives of foundation organizers Claud B. and Marie G. Hamill in the UH Libraries’ Special Collections. Pratt uncovered documents and pictures relating to the Hamills’ efforts to raise funds for Cruiser Houston, a World War II-era heavy cruiser named for the city of Houston.

A few years later, when the university’s M.D. Anderson Library announced plans to create an exhibition drawing on materials from the Cruiser Houston Collection, it seemed like the perfect first project on campus for the Houston-based foundation to help fund, says Tom Brown, the foundation grants director.

After that first $25,000 grant in 2003, the Hamill Foundation has continued to give steadily, year after year, helping to support a variety of programs at UH.

“We are really pleased to be associated with UH,” Brown says. “It's a quality organization, and we have really liked the transition of the university over the last several years from being more of a local commuter school to taking on a national scope and a national quality of education.”

The Hamill Foundation, established by the Hamills in 1969, has made grants to more than seventy-five educational, scientific, charitable, and religious organizations, primarily in the Houston area. Claud Hamill was a successful oilman, who, along with his wife, gave generously throughout his lifetime to causes throughout the community. The foundation was created to continue that legacy, even after their deaths.

On the UH campus, foundation support can be seen most prominently in the M.D. Anderson Library, the university’s premier research library, with gifts totaling $235,000 to the library’s building projects. Those funds helped create the Student Learning Commons—a digital learning space—and the U.S.S. Houston (CA-30) Exhibition as well as to help furnish student study areas.

But the foundation’s impact on campus and throughout the UH System is evident elsewhere.

In the Department of History, foundation funds created the Hamill Fellowship in the Center for Public History. The fellowship program supports graduate studies in history through participation in the editing and production of the Houston Review of History and Culture, a popular history magazine published by the Center for Public History.

Funds also have helped pay for classroom space at the newly authorized nursing program at the UH System at Sugar Land, as well as clinic space renovations at the College of Optometry Multiple Sclerosis Eye Center for Analysis, Research and Education.

“The Hamill Foundation epitomizes the positive impact a foundation can make through its generosity,” says Dana Rooks, Elizabeth D. Rockwell Endowed Dean’s Chair and dean of libraries. “The legacy of Mr. and Mrs. Hamill continues through the gifts of their foundation and its visionary leadership. The foundation contributes to the development of our students, who will become the future leaders of our city, state, and nation.”
Two ‘GREEN’ Gifts for One Great Cause

UH’s commitment to green initiatives received a welcome boost when BP America presented UH President Renu Khator with a solar-powered vehicle as part of a $300,000 donation to the university in support of research and student success.

BP’s gift was presented by Gabriel Cuadra (‘88, M.B.A. ’95), BP manager for compliance, and Gerald Balboa (‘93, J.D. ’98), senior vice president for BP North American Gas & Power, as the second installment of a $750,000 pledge the company made in March 2008. The gift for the Cullen College of Engineering, the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and the C.T. Bauer College of Business will support the university’s efforts to recruit and retain diverse students, attract National Merit scholars, and fund an internship program.

“We are proud to support the University of Houston’s engineering, research, math, and science programs as part of its vital efforts to attract and train the students who will become the next generation of engineers and leaders in American business and industry,” says Cuadra.

The BP solar buggy is equipped with two electric motors with 30 horsepower, delivering more than 170 pounds of torque and making it one of the most powerful all-terrain vehicles in its category. With standard four-wheel drive, it seats up to four passengers and offers a quiet, yet powerful, ride with less pollution than most ATVs.

“We share with BP a social responsibility to find better ways to develop safe, clean, and sustainable energy for the future, as well as renewable energy products that reduce environmental impact. This new solar buggy supports our commitment to UH Green initiatives, the environment, and renewable energy sources and is a great example of social responsibility in action,” says Khator.

“"We are proud to support the University of Houston’s engineering, research, math, and science programs as part of its vital efforts to attract and train the students who will become the next generation of engineers and leaders in American business and industry,” says Gabriel Cuadra.
AN ETERNAL DEVOTION

by Michelle Hillen

Following his death in 1979 after twelve years of teaching mathematics at the University of Houston, Professor John Mac Nerney was remembered by his colleagues as a gifted mathematician, a wonderful teacher, and a great friend.

Now, nearly thirty years later, his legacy at the university will grow even stronger with a $925,000 gift left to UH by his wife of thirty-four years, the late Kathleen O. Mac Nerney.

The gift, left as a bequest in her will, will be used to establish the Dr. John S. and Kathleen O. Mac Nerney Endowment in the M.D. Anderson Library. Annual income from the endowment will be used to provide support to the library for the acquisition of resources.

During his time at the university, John Mac Nerney—known as “Mac”—specialized in mathematical analysis, was a member of several math and science societies, and published articles in dozens of professional journals.

“He was well-known and respected,” says Professor of Mathematics Garrett Etnen, who served as chair of the math department when Mac Nerney died. “He was a very serious mathematician. He was an outstanding teacher, but very demanding.”

Kathleen Mac Nerney was a loyal wife who was very supportive of her husband’s work, Etnen says. She died June 20, 2007.

In her will, she outlined her intention to give half of her estate to create an endowed bequest—one of a variety of bequest options available to those who want to make a charitable gift by will.

The gift of an endowment means the gift will continue indefinitely. “It’s appropriate that a man who was so devoted to his work and his students’ success should be remembered with such a gift,” Etnen notes.

Do something for yourself and the University of Houston

Establish a University of Houston Charitable Gift Annuity with cash or appreciated securities to:

• receive a fixed payment for life;
• receive a charitable income tax deduction;
• support the legacy of the University of Houston.

GIFT ANNUITY RATES*

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>65 &amp; 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>70 &amp; 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>75 &amp; 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>80 &amp; 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>90 &amp; 90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Effective February 1, 2009. Rates subject to change.
Seek advice from your tax or legal advisor when considering a charitable gift annuity.
The minimum amount to establish a charitable gift annuity with the UH Foundation is $20,000.

Visit us at www.uh.edu/plannedgiving.
For more information, contact Lynn Mason (‘80), CFRE, at 713-743-4351 or e-mail lmason@uh.edu.
Cougars Make an IMPACT,
Thanks to Your Support

Gifts have an impact on UH programs every day, providing today’s UH students with additional encouragement and financial support to thrive. By contributing, alumni show they care about UH students and a world-class UH education.

UH graduates give for many reasons—to express thanks to former mentors, to give back to the institution that provided a strong start, to honor cherished memories, to increase opportunity for today’s students and tomorrow’s leaders, or to be part of something big. These gifts publicly demonstrate pride in the University of Houston—its students, faculty, and programs—and a commitment to the future.

To thank alumni who supported UH with a gift this past fall, some of today’s UH students have created a special video message—a genuine expression of thanks for those alumni who give . . . and an inspiration for others who will consider future support.

These students are hopeful that all alumni will view their video message, which is available at www.uh.edu/youareuh-video. Visitors also can learn more about the students involved by visiting www.uh.edu/youareuh. For more information, contact us at the University of Houston, Office of Annual Giving, 307 McElhinney Hall, Houston, Texas 77204-5016, 1-877-755-0559, or at annualgiving@uh.edu.